THEOSOPHY

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Like an actor the soul is bound to play during the cycle of births up to the very threshold of Paranirvana, many parts, which often are disagreeable to it, but like a bee, collecting its honey from every flower, and leaving the rest to feed the worms of the earth, our spiritual individuality, the Sutratma, collecting only the nectar of moral qualities and consciousness from every terrestrial personality in which it has to clothe itself, forced by Karma, unites at last all these qualities in one, having then become a perfect being, a Dhyan Chohan.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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Universal Brotherhood is the union of diverse elements in one complete whole. Martanda, the mighty light of men, withholds no rays from the good or the evil, and why should man, who fades from view before Surya has revolved one cycle, keep back his love and help from any creature whatsoever?

—Old Hindu Book

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 65 APRIL, 1977 NUMBER 6

THE NATURE OF MAN

CONFRONTED by the seemingly endless complexity of the history of the early races of mankind—the primordial formation of his bodies or vehicles and the gradual assembling of the principles of his being, to make him what he is today—the student of Theosophy may sometimes wonder why all this instruction about an exceedingly ancient past should be necessary. Surely the ethics at the core of the philosophy, coupled with efforts to overcome the "heresy of separateness," have greater importance than this remote occult detail of psycho-physiology!

Already the modern world, in the persons of its most thoughtful representatives, is coming to the realization that cooperation and brotherhood, not only among human beings, but in relation to the entire fraternity of life, is the law of progress and even of planetary survival. The rebirth of moral philosophy is everywhere in evidence, especially in the practical relationships of man with nature. Even thinkers whose ideas still have the forms provided by materialistic assumption are speculating, today, about altruism as a force in evolution, and physicists are beginning to give close attention to the part played by consciousness in our understanding of the dynamics of the natural world. The ecologists are pioneers in spreading recognition of the law of interdependence, while jurists are declaring for a legal system which would support the rights of all living things.

These advances are indeed promising, and with the unfolding sweep of the cycle there will undoubtedly be more of these de-

velopments to come. But there remain areas of mystery as yet hardly touched by the regenerating spirit of the time. Humans are still beset by psychological and moral frustrations. The contradictions of human nature are not illuminated by the growing body of knowledge concerned with harmonious relations with earth and sea and air. The question of how or why man should be endowed with self-consciousness, and what this capacity for reflection and innovation means in relation to human origins and destiny has no answer from the best of modern thinking. Such secrets, for both scientists and scholars, are still wrapped in the mystery of ancient myths. While there are those, today, who speak wisely of the need to regard mankind and all its members, not as they are, or seem to be, but in terms of their future evolutionary possibilities, this idea, while true and a necessary consideration, is actually a speculation, although based on countless analogies in human experience.

There is still, in other words, a great step to be taken by the world toward the understanding of man. The heart of the matter is the essential nature of the human being as mind—mind as the prior reality, not derivative, not an efflorescence of material evolution. The puzzles of human nature have explanation only in an understanding that man, as we experience him, is a two-sided ego, that he is both creature and creator, a being answerable to the laws of spirit as well as to the rule of external nature. This is a twofold reality of which, apart from the Wisdom-Religion, we have only the vague intimations provided in the inner life. The record of such gleams of intuition are known to us, intellectually, mostly through the sometimes brooding, sometimes ecstatic utterances of poets, yet every human has his own intimations of a greatness lost to impotence, of aspiration chained by circumstance. And who, in those silent hours, has not exclaimed to himself, "Why should this be?" Who has not echoed, if in words less eloquent, the sad cry of Shelley to the West Wind:

> Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
> I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed
> A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
> One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

More serenely, Thoreau said in *Walden*:

> I only know myself as a human entity; the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections; and I am sensible of a certain

> doubleness by which I can stand as remote from myself as from another. However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it; and that is no more I than it is you. When the play, it may be the tragedy, of life is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned.

In such reflections, often the undeveloped part of the subjective wonderings of men, lie the raw materials of the science of self-understanding—the sort of science required as the counterpart of the transcendent feeling which is the spirit of true religion.

The portion of *The Secret Doctrine,* then, which deals with the origin of Man represents the ancient science of the Wisdom-Religion, bringing understanding of the field for the exercise of the will and the fulfillment of ethical longing. Man, it becomes plain from this study, is both a savior and the one that is saved. He is both the animal to be made human and the Flame or ray of Universal Mind. As a twofold being he has a twofold purpose: by transforming himself he transforms the world. It is a Promethean sacrifice and a Herculean labor, and small wonder that, knowing so little of either his original divine intent or his transcendent destiny, the pain and often the degradation attending this undertaking fills him with feelings of desperate resistance and sometimes fury at his frustrations and defeats. Why should so much misfortune be his lot?

The history of Man given in *The Secret Doctrine* explains, if it cannot at once assuage, this pain. Yet it is a part of the potentiality of humans that they become able to cope more intelligently as they begin to understand. The explanation begins with an account of the *meaning* of the World, a meaning in which Man plays a crucial and fulfilling part. *The Secret Doctrine* says:

> . . . the Universe . . . manifests periodically, for purposes of the collective progress of the countless *lives,* the outbreathings of the One *Life;* in order that through the *Ever-Becoming,* every cosmic atom in this infinite Universe, passing from the formless and the intangible, through the mixed natures of the semi-terrestrial, down to matter in full generation, and then back again, reascending at each new period higher and nearer the final goal; that each atom, we say, *may reach through individual merits and efforts* that plane where it re-becomes the one unconditioned ALL. But between the Alpha and the Omega

there is the weary "Road" hedged in by thorns, that "goes down first, then—

Winds up hill all the way
Yes, to the very end. . . ."

> Starting upon the long journey immaculate; descending more and more into sinful matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested *Space*—the *Pilgrim,* having struggled through and suffered in every form of life and being, is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective Humanity. This, *he has made in his own image.* In order to progress upwards and homewards, the "God" has now to ascend the weary uphill path of the Golgotha of Life. It is the martyrdom of self-conscious existence. Like Visvakarman he has to sacrifice *himself to himself* in order to redeem all creatures, to resurrect from the many into the *One Life.* (I, 268.)

How does the Pilgrim connect itself with "every atom"? This explanation is given:

> For, to complete the *septenary man,* to add to his three lower principles and cement with the spiritual Monad—which could never dwell in such a form otherwise than in an *absolutely latent state*—two connecting principles are needed: *Manas* and *Kama.* (II, 79.). . . In other words, the two higher principles *can have no individuality on Earth,* cannot be *man,* unless there is (*a*) the Mind, the *Manas-Ego,* to cognize itself, and (*b*) the terrestrial *false* personality, or the body of egotistical desires and personal Will, to cement the whole, as if round a pivot (which it is, truly), to the physical form of man. It is the *Fifth* and the *Fourth* principles—*Manas* and *Kama rupa*—that contain the dual personality: the real immortal Ego (*if it assimilates itself to the two higher*) and the false and transitory personality, the *mayavi* or astral body, so-called, or the *animal-human* Soul—the two having to be closely blended for purposes of a *full* terrestrial existence. (II, 241-42.)

Where did the human form come from? It was projected, our text says (*S.D.* II, 86, 87.), "out of the ethereal body of his creator"—the lunar spirits, called the "Pygmalions of primeval man," who "failed to animate the statue—*intellectually.*" (II, 102.) These "Fathers," H.P.B. says, "the lower Angels, are all Nature-Spirits and the higher Elementals [which] possess an intelligence of their own: but this is not enough to construct a THINKING man. (II, 102.) The link between the human Monad and the animal Monad (which are one) is the informing principle of

Mind, brought by the Sons of MAHAT, some of whom *"breathed of their essence into Manushya* (men); *and some took in man their abode."* (II, 103.) H.P.B. comments:

> This shows that not all men became incarnations of the "divine *Rebels,*" but only a few among them. The remainder had their fifth principle simply quickened by the spark thrown into it, which accounts for the great difference between the intellectual capacities of men and races. Had not the "sons of Mahat," speaking allegorically, skipped the intermediate worlds, in their impulse toward intellectual freedom, the animal man would never have been able to reach upward from this earth, and attain through self-exertion his ultimate goal. The cyclic pilgrimage would have to be performed through all the planes of existence half unconsciously, if not entirely so, as in the case of the animals. It is owing to this rebellion of intellectual life against the morbid inactivity of pure spirit, that we are what we are—self-conscious, thinking men, with the capabilities and attributes of Gods in us, for good as much as for evil. Hence the REBELS are our saviours. Let the philosopher ponder well over this, and more than one mystery will become clear to him. It is only by the attractive force of the contrasts that the two opposites—Spirit and Matter—can be cemented on Earth, and, smelted in the fire of self-conscious experience and suffering, find themselves wedded in Eternity. (II, 103.)

The Lunar Fathers, while unable to supply man with mind, became, H.P.B. says, "the first Race, and thus shared its destiny and further evolution." (II, 95.) Mind would be given by "that class of Devas who became symbolized in Greece under the name of Prometheus":

> Each class of Creators endows man with what it has to give: the one builds his external form; the other gives him its essence, which later on becomes the Human *Higher Self* owing to the *personal exertion of the individual;* but they could not make men as they were themselves—perfect, because sinless; sinless, because having only the first pale, shadowy outlines of attributes, and these all perfect—from the human standpoint—white, pure and cold as the virgin snow. Where there is no struggle, there is no merit.

Man's nature, then, is the fused composite of various ingredients, some earthly, some divine:

> . . . man was not "created" the complete being he is now, however imperfect he still remains. There was a spiritual, a psychic, an intellectual, and an animal evolution, from the highest to the lowest, as well as a physical development—from the

simple and homogeneous, up to the more complex and heterogeneous; though not quite on the lines traced for us by the modern evolutionists. This double evolution in two contrary directions, required various ages, of divers natures and degrees of spirituality and intellectuality, to fabricate the being now known as man. Furthermore, the one absolute, ever acting and never erring law, which proceeds on the same lines from one eternity (or Manvantara) to the other—ever furnishing an ascending scale for the manifested, or that which we call the great Illusion (*Maha-Maya*), but plunging Spirit deeper and deeper into materiality on the one hand, and then *redeeming it through flesh* and liberating it—this law, we say, uses for these purposes the Beings from other and higher planes, men, or *Minds* (Manus) in accordance with their Karmic exigencies.

The Progenitors of Man, called in India "Fathers," Pitara or Pitris, are the creators of our bodies and lower principles. They are ourselves, as the *first personalities,* and *we are they.* (II, 87-88.)

In a reply to a query in *Lucifer* (VI, 412.), H.P.B. refers to this side of man's development:

The lower Quarternary is evolved during the first *three* Races, the physical body not being regarded as a "principle" in the real sense of the term. The Monad—Atma-Buddhi—as has been so fully explained, broods over this evolving Quaternary, but cannot come into contact with it until Manas enters and draws them into connexion. . . . Buddhi is latent in present humanity, but you cannot speak of it as "incarnating" in Manas: Manas is not fleshly. Further, Manas aspires toward Buddhi, Buddhi does not stoop to Manas. Buddhi will become active during the Sixth Race. . . .

If you refer to p. 167, vol. II, "Secret Doctrine," you will see that it distinctly states that "those who were half ready," who received but a spark, constitute average humanity. Therefore it is incorrect to say that *we* are the Manasaputras. We are the Pitris and received a spark from the Manasaputras. Those in whom the Manasaputras, as such, incarnate, do not belong to our average humanity.

One might say that the difficulties and paradoxes experienced by human beings—the confusing feelings of dual identity, the moral struggle between selfishness and altruism, the alternating alliances with desire and aspiration—are all part of the struggle of human beings to *become* Manasputras. We are the Pitris because we think of ourselves in terms of our lunar attributes. Yet the Promethean greatness that we sometimes feel, and which is realized by the few, is the potential aspect of our identity—the spiritual seed—which

contains the promise of the full Manasic egoship that will be natural to all mankind only in the next, fifth, Round. This egoship is an evolution achieved, as the Third Fundamental Proposition declares, by self-induced and self-devised efforts.

Meanwhile, another passage in *The Secret Doctrine,* while not explaining all, throws a clear light on the anguish of self-conscious existence, which becomes at least bearable in the light of the dignity and heroism of the Promethean mission. H.P.B. says:

> . . . the Host that incarnated in a portion of humanity, though led to it by Karma or *Nemesis,* preferred free-will to passive slavery, intellectual self-conscious pain and even torture "while myriad time shall flow"—to inane, imbecile, instinctual beatitude. Knowing such an incarnation was premature and not in the programme of nature, the heavenly host, "Prometheus," still sacrificed itself to benefit thereby, at least, one portion of mankind. But while saving man from mental darkness, they inflicted upon him the tortures of the self-consciousness of his responsibility—the result of his free will—besides every ill to which mortal man and flesh are heir to. This torture Prometheus accepted for himself, since the Host became henceforth blended with the tabernacle prepared for them, which was still unachieved at that period of formation.
>
> Spiritual evolution being incapable of keeping pace with the physical, once its homogeneity was broken by the admixture, the gift thus became the chief cause, if not the sole origin of Evil. . . . In the case of Prometheus, Zeus represents the Host of the primeval progenitors, of the PITAR, the "Fathers" who created man senseless and without any mind; while the divine Titan stands for the Spiritual creators, the *devas* who "fell" into generation. The former are spiritually lower, but physically stronger, than the "Prometheans": therefore, the latter are shown conquered. . . . This drama of the struggle of Prometheus with the Olympic tyrant and despot, sensual Zeus, one sees enacted daily within our actual mankind: the lower passions chain the higher aspirations to the rock of matter, to generate in many a case the vulture of sorrow, pain, and repentance. . . .
>
> Man willl rebecome the *free* Titan of old, but not before cyclic evolution has re-established the broken harmony between the two natures—the terrestrial and the divine; after which he becomes impermeable to the lower titanic forces, inculnerable in his personality and immortal in his individuality, which cannot happen before every animal element is eliminated from his nature. When man understands that *"Deus non fecit mortem"* (*Sap.* I, 13), but that man has created it himself, he will re-become the Prometheus before his Fall. (II, 421-22.)

The gist of a reconciliation of human beings with their confused and bewildering condition is found in these teachings, which provide a conception of man which not only explains but inspires. It accounts for the multiple motivations which flow through human decision, and provides an ideal consistent with the highest intuitions and longings. The claim that the world will learn from Theosophy the solution of its deepest mysteries, as from "the light that never shone on land or sea," was no idle boast.

THE SOUL'S GARMENTS

The "mind" with which we work is just a bundle of perceptions of this physical plane wherein every idea held has a physical basis. Can such a "bundle" include or solve that which is the cause, or sustaining power itself? Each plane has its own mode or "mind," and the only way by which we in lower *manas* can approximate the inner is by rising to that plane where the perception and the mode is different. Can it be wondered at that all attempts to solve by brain-mind must be temporary hypotheses, one after the other discarded as we see its futility? Yet the very exasperation induced sometimes opens a door to us.

There is a state of Soul as Spectator without a spectacle, also many states of "spectacles" more or less circumscribed. Spirit, I think, would not be the whole of any given class, although such a condition might be called "spirituality," if the ideas were the eternal verities. Naught adheres to Spirit.

There must be that Mind or Power to Perceive which takes in primal causes as well as subsequent effects; also that other circumscribed action which deals with minor causes and effects. Mind is the power to perceive residing in the Perceiver, its manifold perceptions and possibilities presenting kinds of mind and separative ideas and actions. All spiritual beings are the same in kind, differing only in degree. Terms are confusing, but ideas may be had out of the confusion, if we adhere to the One Reality—which is *both* Being and Non-Being. Each has his own way of seeing and translating what he sees.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THE MYSTERY OF INDIVIDUALITY

VI: ENTERING THE HUMAN KINGDOM

It may be a parable and an allegory *within an allegory*. Its solution is left to the intuition of the student, if he only reads . . . with his *spiritual eye*.

—*The Secret Doctrine*

THERE are said to be various Lunar Pitris or mindless men, the builders of the human form. The first reach the incipient human stage in Round One, the second arrive later, in Round Two, and so on up to the middle of the Fourth Round. In the most progressed of the Lunar Fathers the four lower principles were combined in one as an active unity, but in the great bulk of them it appears that only three and a half principles were awakened. These mindless monads, says H.P.B., "were of seven classes," which would indicate that they ranged all the way from *three*-principled consciousness—with the faintest touch of the fourth, or Kama, awake—up to full, *four*-principled beings. This is important to bear in mind, for now we come to the period called in Theosophical history "the lighting up of mind," a period commencing, it is said, about eighteen million years ago, and encompassing a cycle of several million years before the door to entry into the human kingdom was closed for this manvantara.

As there were seven classes of mindless men, it may be that there were seven ways or variations in method of arousing to activity the latent mind principle. To give some inkling of the complex lines of Karmic heredity coming to focus in this period of our history, a tentative classification of the incarnating monads is given below, though it is only one of many other possible divisions:

1. Self-shining Sages who were first to enter the mindless forms (those that were completely ready) in the early Third Race, and who later consciously produced through the power of Kriyasakti an elect race.

2. In this race, even greater beings, great planetary guides, could incarnate, and therein sound the keynote of truth for the coming human evolution. These Great Beings later withdrew, we are told, leaving the line of succession to lesser sages. This race of Elect has never died, it is said.

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3. Those who were self-conscious in previous manvantaras and were helped by the Elder Brothers to incarnate in the waiting forms because they were not wise enough to do so unaided.

4. Those who were self-conscious in previous manvantaras and were unable to completely incarnate, but rather overshadowed or projected a "spark" of lower Manas into the forms that were almost ready. The complete trinity of Atma-Buddhi-Manas did not incarnate.

5. Those who were self-conscious in prior worlds and who refused to incarnate, delaying until the forms became corrupt, at which time they were forced to enter the forms lest worst deterioration set in.

6. Those incipient humans who were partially ready, and whose latent mind principle was quickened by association with the foregoing classes. This class is said to constitute the majority of mankind today, and represents the "new crop" of men. In prior manvantaras they has risen to no higher life than that represented by the lower kingdoms. In the Fifth Round they should reach the status of those in whom lower mind is now fully awake. Included in this class were also monads who, through misuse of their powers, lost their self-consciousness in former Manvantaras, and were in the present period obliged to again "go through" all the elemental kingdoms to gain fresh contact with life and earn a new chance.

7. The lowest class of incipient humans, who in the latter part of the Third Round had just evolved from their transitional forms in the animal kingdom and were not ready. They could not receive even a "spark." They represent the lowest class of primitive man, whose mental powers are little above the animals.

This article will be confined chiefly to a consideration of the "sixth" class of monads, for there we have involved that engrossing problem of how a new individuality, a new thinker, is born.

First let it be said that, broadly speaking, the lighting up of mind is a process that never started and never ceases. It is going on right now in the elemental kingdoms. Each kingdom represents a stage in the unfolding of consciousness. In the same sense that no Theosophist was ever converted to Theosophy, Theosophy for him being in part but a natural extension of his previous line of thinking, so we can say that no being was ever *made* self-conscious. It would be impossible to arouse the mind principle unless it had been there all the time.

Human self-consciousness represents but one of many stages in the power of becoming, while the *power* to become is inherent in everything. Human consciousness is therefore not conferred,

though beings in a higher state may temporarily descend thereto. As a matter of fact, Theosophy regards ordinary egoism, or personal self-awareness as but a transitional condition leading to a state of universal and intelligent awareness of the SELF of all, accompanied by appropriate responsibilities. All these states have no permanent existence of themselves, any more than the waking or dreaming states are permanent. They are the result of beings identifying themselves with a particular state. When we "raise" the lower kingdoms to our state as new thinkers, we have not produced anything "new"; we have produced a change of state. Some day, perhaps, we will change *our* state and rise to a higher condition—that of direct perception.

"The Sons of MAHAT," or Mind, it is said in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 103), *"are the quickeners of the human Plant. They are the Waters falling upon the arid soil of latent life, and the Spark that vivifies the human animal. They are the Lords of Spiritual Life eternal."* . . . *"In the beginning* (in the Second Race) *some* (of the Lords) *only breathed of their essence into Manushya* (men); *and some took in man their abode."* This shows that not all men became incarnations of the 'divine *Rebels,*' but only a few among them. The remainder had their fifth principle simply quickened by the spark thrown into it, which accounts for the great difference between the intellectual capacities of men and races."

Had not these Sons of Mind so acted, "the animal man would never had been able to reach upward from this earth, and attain through self-exertion his ultimate goal." The average human is described as similar to "the hot-house, artificially quickened plants in nature," having a spark which is but latent in lower life. In contact with the four lower principles, the active fifth principle becomes the "sparking power."

The question naturally arises as to just how "the Sons of Wisdom . . . set fire to the combined lower principles and the monad, thus lighting up Manas in the new men." What does it mean to "project a spark," using the graphic phraseology of *The Secret Doctrine?* Human beings may at present be incapable of completely understanding all that is involved in this initiating process, but analogy would suggest that the methods could not be fundamentally different from those employed by parents in awakening the dormant intelligence of their children, namely, through association, education (*educo*—to draw out), and estab-

lishing bonds of sympathy. Natural hero-worship must also play its part in inspiring younger souls to emulate the example of the elders. According to Theosophical history, infant humanity was taught the eternal universal verities by its Divine Instructors. These ideas were said to have been *burned* into the mind of nascent mankind. Could not this have been one of the chief methods of "lighting up"? Robert Crosbie once asked: "Can we not conceive of an incipient humanity in its early stages of instructibility being given by degrees the knowledge of those with 'mind'?" "Universal tradition," states H.P.B., "shows primitive man living for ages together with his Creators and first instructors . . ." These Great Teachers, *The Secret Doctrine* further tells us, "revealed to the incarnated Monads that had just shaken off their vehicles of the lower Kingdoms—and who had, therefore, lost every recollection of their divine origin—the great spiritual truths of the transcendental worlds."

The statement just quoted to the effect that once the mind of man is awakened it is "through *self-exertion*" that his ultimate goal is attained, deserves special emphasis. It will be remembered that the Third Fundamental of *The Secret Doctrine* states that individuality is acquired "first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts. . . ." Elsewhere the author speaks of "the sacred spark which burns and *expands* into the flower of human reason and self-consciousness." However indispensable was the help of the primeval Instructors in setting fire to the mind of early mankind, unless the flame was nurtured by the recipients of the "gift" it would burn low and eventually be extinguished.

> Each class of Creators endows man with what it has to give: the one builds his external form; the other gives him its essence, which later on becomes the Human *Higher Self* owing to the *personal exertion of the individual.* (*S.D.* II, 95.)

The Higher Self, the Divine Monad, exists alike in all beings, yet *Light on the Path* tells us: "He will not know thee unless thou knowest him." If this be true of the Higher Self, it may likewise be true of Manas, the Higher Mind. It may therefore take many many incarnations of effort before a genuine sense of egoity is developed.

Those who "received only a spark" have but an inadequate form of self-consciousness because yet they are so confused by impressions from the four lower principles. The fact of self-consciousness is there—they can say: I am I, Who am I? Where

did I come from?—but not until they have learned to *dis*-associate consciousness from the body and say "whatever I am, I cannot be this body," will they have fully emerged as egos. They are in the child state of consciousness—which is why the average member of the human race is so easily swayed by propaganda, by desires and passions, by false leaders and priestcraft; the higher wisdom and consciousness has not yet penetrated the brain mind.

There is no need for discouragement, however. The advance to human maturity is gradual, just as is the advance to the divine stage. An individual at times can *temporarily* function on the higher plane. Meanwhile, help is ever available. The initial awakening is continued by the sure alchemical method of mixture, amalgamation and precipitation. In other words, through the law of brotherhood individuals find themselves in the company of men of all degrees of intelligence and morality, and through osmosis there is a natural transfusion of thoughts and feelings. Anytime we look at any one, "lives" automatically pass from us to him and from him to us. By re-*mind*ing others, by re-*mind*ing ourselves, we are "lighting up" ourselves and others. The time for "precipitation" will of course some day come; the biblical story about the separation of the sheep from the goats is no fantasy. Each must decide for himself whether he will attain a conscious, immortal life in spirit, or extinguish his self-consciousness in "matter."

Students often wonder what is the highest service in which they can engage to become a "co-worker with Great Nature" in her evolutionary processes. An article entitled "Meditation and Action," originally published in Mr. Judge's *Path,* indicates how the whole of creation can be elevated, bringing about a universal lighting of the fires of consciousness in all nature's realms. Here is depicted the highest expression of individuality, a complete, conscious identification with the All:

> The sympathetic relief of physical suffering is well; the teaching by which man's mental horizon is widened and man's moral nature is elevated is better. But best of all is to *become* part of the spiritual pabulum by which Humanity lives, and the very first step on the path that leads to this stupendous result is meditation; in other words, the detachment from all the ephemeral interests of life,—which detachment displays itself by perfect equanimity in good and evil fortune, the centering of all thought on the Supreme, until thought itself drops off and the soul is face to face with Deity.

It will be apparent in the above that the "service of man" is the key note throughout, but the "service of man" and what is more or less accurately described as the "Worship of God" must go hand in hand, until they finally become one and identical. . . . When the self as we understand it is annihilated, when the soul has been able to endure the transcendent vision of Itself as Deity, when difference no longer exists and the one is merged in the All, the store-house of spiritual energy is thereby replenished, and all Humanity receives an impulse that raises them a step nearer the Divine Union also,—nay further, the Divine impulse after passing through man descends to vivify the lower creation. The whole Universe is thrilled by it! (THEOS. 1:388.)

THE LIFE OF THE ATOM

Our philosophy teaches us that atoms are *not* matter; but that the smallest molecule—composed of milliards of indivisible and imponderable atoms—is substance. Nevertheless, the atom is not a mathematical point or a fiction; but verily an immutable Entity, a *reality within an appearance*—the molecule being in occult philosophy but a figment of that which is called *maya* or illusion. The atom informs the molecule, as life, spirit, soul, mind, inform Man. Therefore is the atom all these, and Force itself, as Dr. Pirogoff suspected. During the life-cycle the atom represents, *according to the geometrical combinations* of its groupings in the molecule, life, force (or energy), mind and will; for each molecule in space, as each cell in the human body, is only a microcosm within (to it) a relative macrocosm. That which Science refers to as Force, conservation of energy, correlation, continuity, etc., etc., is simply the various effects produced by the presence of atoms, which are, in fact, in their collectivity, simply the (spiritual) sparks of the manifested plane, thrown out by the *Anima Mundi,* the Universal Soul or Mind (*Maha-Buddhi, Mahat*) from the plane of the Unmanifested. In short, the atom may be described as *a compact or crystalized point of* divine Energy and Ideation.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

A THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION

"INGRATITUDE IS NOT ONE OF OUR FAULTS." WE ALWAYS HELP THOSE WHO HELP US. TACT, DISCRETION, AND ZEAL ARE MORE THAN EVER NEEDED. THE HUMBLEST WORKER IS SEEN AND HELPED .˙.

TO a student theosophist, serving whenever and however he could, there came very recently—since the departure from this plane of H. P. Blavatsky—these words of highest cheer from that Master of whom H. P. B. was the reverent pupil. Attested by His real signature and seal, they are given here for the encouragement and support of all those who serve the Theosophical Society—and, through it, humanity—as best they can; given in the belief that it was not intended that the recipient should sequestrate or absorb them silently, but rather that he should understand them to be his only in the sense that he might share them with his comrades, that his was permitted to be the happy hand to pass them on as the common right, the universal benediction of one and all. The Divine only give to those who give. No greater cheer could well be vouchsafed to earnest workers than the assurance of which these sentences are full. Not a sincere helper, however obscure or insignificant in his own opinion, is outside the range of that watchful eye and helping hand. Not one, if he be sincere, fails to commend himself to the "gratitude" of the highest of the hierarchy thus far revealed to us. Every deed is noted; every aspiration fostered; every spiritual need perceived. If in some dark hour the true helper imagines himself forgotten,

NOTE.—This contribution to the *Path* for August, 1891, by Jasper Niemand, becomes of particular interest to readers by reason of Mr. Judge's reference to it in his article, "An Interesting Letter," which appeared in *Lucifer*, April, 1893 (reprinted in the Judge pamphlet No. 12).

supposes his services to be slight in value or too frail for remembrance, these sentences reassure him in all their pregnant significance; they send him on his arduous way refreshed and strengthened with the knowledge that he can "help" Those who help all. Nothing but ourselves can shut us away from Them. Our own deeds are our Saviors.

How, then, can we best help? Another and much beloved Master—He who first communicated with the western world through Mr. Sinnett—once wrote that there was "hardly a member unable to help" by correcting prevailing misconceptions of Theosophy and by clearly explaining its teachings to outsiders. There are comparatively few of our members yet able to do this, and reasoning along this line we see that the great want in the theosophic ranks today is

A THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION

At the present juncture the theosophical movement exhibits, both in England and the United States, an astonishing activity, a tenacious and all-embracing vitality. Never before in its history has numerical growth been so rapid: one hundred applicants in ten weeks in the dull season here, and four new branches already since the "death" of H. P. Blavatsky. The moment of depression upon the departure of our great Leader from the objective world was so brief as to be scarcely noticeable. Then, all at once, as if inspired by gratitude, by fidelity, by all the promptings of full and loyal hearts, the Society made a bound forward, impelled by the efforts of its individual members towards Solidarity and increased usefulness. The tide of popular opinion is turning. Press comment has become more favorable and more reasonable in the better newspapers; more virulent and extreme in the lower ones, sure sign of our steady—and to them irritating—advance. Each day a swifter momentum is discernible. And on all sides theosophists are found saying and writing, "What can I do for the Cause?" This question is put forward out of lives hampered by care, limited in opportunity, wherein ease is scant and leisure brief, yet it comes so earnestly, so frequently, that reply must be made.

The pressing need of our Society today is a theosophical education, a sound grounding in theosophical teaching. Our members require clearer comprehension of theosophic truth. They lack, in large part, ability to explain the groundwork of the theosophic scheme in simple, direct language to inquirers. They are not able

to give a terse, plain account of the faith that is in them, nor their reasons for holding it. Dazzled by the vastness of the universal plan which theosophic works reveal in glimpses only, they have not realized the desirability, the necessity, in fact, that they should be able to give a clear account of our belief, to themselves in first place, and afterward to others. The composite nature of man, for example, in itself so explanatory of the problems of life, they do not wholly grasp and cannot expound. They are vague,—and Theosophy is considered vague. They are tongue-tied,—and theosophical thought is believed to halt. Their shortenings are all attributed to Thesophy. Most of our students read discursively. Many are unable to present a few fundamental ideas to the understanding of the average man, who inquires or listens, on the trains, or on the streets, at the close of a hard day and with brains already weary with headwork, a man whose life of fevered haste and effort at money getting is so crowded that he has not ten minutes to give to eternal salvation itself, if it were offered to him, while he is often as unconscious as a child to the importance of his thought as affecting his future destiny. Nor can we dispel this unconsciousness, or arrest his attention, until we are able to set before him a few well-digested and apposite facts. Practical, applied Theosophy appeals to him. Basic truths he is ready to understand. He does not yet aspire, perhaps. His devotion slumbers; his mental need is stifled; but give him plain facts, and he listens. The unity of Religion, the Law of Action and Reaction, the necessity for Reincarnation along the line of the persistence of Energy—here are things he will grasp, retain, augment, if they are explained in their bearings upon daily life and its inexplicable, haunting sadness and misery.

Here is a service more needed than any other, which any student can render. The study of the *Key to Theosophy,* as one studies a grammar, the mastery of some one given subject, followed by an effort to write it out, or to speak it, in one's own language for one's self only at first, would assist the student to fix the chief points in his own mind, as well as to express them clearly. A few moments of such study daily, even weekly, would be of immense use to all. We do not need to read so widely, to think so discursively, to have knowledge so profound, or to run so far afield after occult mysteries and laws. We do need, and that urgently, to simplify our thought, to express it lucidly, briefly; to

clarify our knowledge *and to live what we know.*

The opportunity thus afforded for doing good is incalculable. All about us are persons straining at the tether of their creeds, eager to break away to pastures of living Truth. Before the great mysteries of Life they stand dumb as the brute, but with enlarged capacity for suffering; endowed with the reason which in the brute is lacking, but which in the man of today receives little support, scant sustenance from all that he has been taught heretofore. If such a man be met, at the critical moment, by a theosophist willing and able to explain and give reason for what he believes; to indicate the bearings of theosophical truths upon the mental, social, and other conditions of the present time; to point out the relations of Karma and Reincarnation to universal law as partly known to the average mind; the value of the service rendered thus becomes evident, the need of self-education among our members is perceived.

The subject must be studied as we study any other. One branch after another may be taken up, each being the object of meditation and reading until we can render a clear account of it to ourselves in our own words, illustrated by our own experience. It is better to know a little very thoroughly, and to frankly say that we know no more (which always placates an inquirer and inspires confidence in our sincerity), than to seek to impress others by the wide range of our thought. We may incite wonder but we shall not convince or aid. It may seem an insignificant path to point out when one says, "Educate yourselves." It is, in fact, an initial step which is also the final step, for it never ends. And if the enlargement of our own minds, the amplification and serenity of our thought, the clarification of the nature, the knowledge that we have helped others towards these priceless advantages were not sufficient reward for the faithful lover of his kind, reward for labor, inducement for further endeavor, then surely the greatest, the final incentive comes when he remembers that he can help Those who "build the wall" to protect humanity, that he may become Their co-laborer, himself a part of that living wall. The truest way to help is by clearly learning and clearly imparting theosophic truths. It is only done by not straining too far, by educating one's self gradually and thoroughly from the root up, with frequent trials of our own definiteness of idea. Classes may be formed wherein the members examine each other: there are

many ways when the wish and will are strong.

Hand in hand with this effort goes the higher Education. It is Patience. With Patience and knowledge he develops his full power of helpfulness; he becomes great by becoming a greater servant of his fellow-men.

Life is a sheet of paper white
Whereon each one of us may write
This word or two—and then comes night.
Greatly begin! Though thou have time
But for a line, be that sublime:
Not failure, but low aim, is crime.

Pythagoric Sentences from the Protrepics of Iamblichus

As we live through Soul, it must be said that by the Virtue of this we live well; just as because we see through the eyes, we see well through the virtue of these.

It must not be thought that gold can be injured by rust, or virtue by baseness.

We should betake ourselves to virtue as to an inviolable temple, in order that we may not be exposed to any ignoble insolence of soul with respect to our communion with, and continuance in, life.

We should confide in Virtue as in a chaste wife; but trust to Fortune as to an inconstant mistress.

It is better that virtue should be received accompanied with poverty, than wealth with violence; and frugality with health, than voracity with disease.

An abundance of nutriment is noxious to the body; but the body is preserved when the soul is disposed in a becoming manner.

It is equally dangerous to give a sword to a madman and power to a depraved man.

—*Lucifer*

letters • questions • comment

In the article, "The Adepts in America in 1776," Mr. Judge speaks of behind-the-scenes assistance being given to some of those men who were involved in promoting the American revolution. Since it would not be consistent with the philosophy of such advanced beings or the objectives of the Theosophical movement to interfere with either the thinking or the actions of men, what could have been the nature of this assistance?

It is apparent from the article referred to that the assistance was in the form of influence and suggestion, leading directly or indirectly to changes in the circumstances among men. But we might examine this influence more closely. Mr. Judge mentions that, although the American nation was founded in a time when religious bigotry was still strong, religious dogmatism was excluded from its basic documents, the authority relied upon being the natural rights of man and "nature and nature's god." At the same time, Paine's writings urged freedom from the paternalism of the English crown, resting the argument for founding a self-governing society on human capacity for self-reliance, not on some economic theory or a religious belief. Mr. Judge also points out that many of the revolutionists—Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin, among others—were Freemasons. That is, they were men who expected to think things through for themselves. In this framework of intellectual independence derived from sound principles, no suggestion or influence can operate as "interference."

The publication of this article in the *Theosophist* (October, 1883) drew comment from a reader, and in her reply (reprinted in THEOSOPHY 21:390) H.P.B. makes it clear that the adepts exert their influence in directions that will arouse in men the consciousness of their universal higher nature, encouraging reliance on that source. That is, the Adepts are *teachers,* not personal gods. As men themselves, but perfected in compassion as well as knowledge, they cannot be indifferent to the struggles of humanity; but neither can they, as the most highly developed beings in

nature, manipulate or coerce, which would be to violate the evolutionary processes of their less progressed brothers.

In *The Ocean of Theosophy* Mr. Judge observes that were the adepts to make themselves known openly in times when men are interested mainly in material advantage, they would be "worshipped as gods by some and hunted as devils by others." When an outside force—a supreme being or any external pressure or psychic effect —replaces the inner moral sense as the source of judgment and decision, some kind of dependence on form as identity always seems to follow. Men then categorize each other, as either good or bad, and those of extraordinary knowledge and capacity are seen by their less accomplished fellows as pure embodiments of good or evil—*i.e.*, as gods or devils.

We tend to equate power and knowledge with manipulation, probably because this enters so extensively into human relationships, those with the natural world as well as with other men. While physical objects and many lower forms of life seem to lend themselves naturally and acceptably to manipulation (in the non-pejorative sense of the word), their equally natural responses reliably reflect our intentions as their managers. One could say that to the extent those intentions are fitting and appropriate, the effects will tend to be harmonious. But men cannot be manipulated unless they are wrongly treated as objects. Choice is the essence of action for the human being. Not exercising choice, men do not learn, though they may, and indeed will, be conditioned. To be able to make the best possible choice for any given set of circumstances is full freedom of soul. A man might, therefore, learn much through openness to suggestion from those more knowledgeable, *if* the choice of a line of action has already been made by him. This certainly seemed the case with the men who carried forward the American revolution. The will to action in many of these men originated in a fundamental feeling of the human need and obligation to be independent, making them receptive to suggestions consistent with that idea.

In this sense, all men who pursue a course toward liberation of mind can be assisted to do more effectively what they have already resolved upon. Could Thomas Paine have written so convincingly to his compatriots to assert their rights if he had not cherished and exercised his own? Would the author of "Common Sense" and "The Rights of Man," who, as Mr. Judge remarks, "could be

trusted to stand almost alone with the lamp of truth in his hand amidst others . . . who quaked with fear," have withstood the abuse and neglect that became his lot and still upheld the truth, while subject to some external or "interfering" persuasion? Paine wrote of the inspiration that came to him as ideas which "bolt into the mind of their own accord." He said of them, "I have always made it a rule to treat these voluntary visitors with civility, and it is from them I have acquired all the knowledge that I have." To a strong mind of noble imagination, no kindred idea that is presented will foster a debilitating dependency, but will rather enrich the soil nourishing the ideas already there.

So the ideals of human freedom and solidarity were formulated in terms of the most vital and promising mental conceptions prevailing at the time of the American revolution: self-reliance in relation to political freedom. If, as Mr. Judge suggests in his *Notes on the Gita* (p. 87), the ideas of Karma and reincarnation had also been a natural part of the mental and psychic soil of the time, the uses of the freedom attained would have been more in the direction of humane regard for the blacks, the Indians, and the poor.

THE ANGRY TREE

In Australia there grows a species of acacia commonly called the "angry tree." It reaches the height of 80 feet after a rapid growth, and in outward appearance somewhat resembles a gigantic century plant. One of these curious plants was brought from Australia and set out in Virginia, Nevada, where it has been seen by many persons. When the sun sets the leaves fold up, and the tender twigs coil tightly like a little pig's tail. If the shoots are handled the leaves rustle and move uneasily for a time. If this queer plant is removed from one pot to another, it seems angry, and the leaves stand out in all directions like quills on a porcupine. A most pungent and sickening odour, said to resemble that given off by rattle-snakes when annoyed, fills the air, and it is only after an hour or so that the leaves fold in their natural way.

—LUCIFER

on the lookout

Atlantis Unnamed

While there is no great novelty in the recent scientific report (*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner,* Sept. 23, 1976) that Europe and North America were once joined together, but millions of years ago gradually split apart, leaving the Atlantic between them, this "discovery" becomes of interest because of its parallels with statements made in *The Secret Doctrine* nearly a hundred years ago. There is, however, no mention of Atlantis. Robert West of the Milwaukee Public Museum and Mary Dawson of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh are quoted as saying that "a land bridge once spanned the northern Atlantic Ocean between North America and Europe." The fossils of mammals, birds, and other animals found on Canada's Ellesmere Island, above the Arctic circle west of Greenland, match similar remains in Europe and the western United States. This land bridge theory is now replacing the traditional explanation that ancient animals migrated from Asia to North America by land which joined the Asian continent with Alaska, across the Bering Sea.

The Bridge Is a Continent!

The evidence presented in *The Secret Doctrine* for the connection between Europe and America in the distant geological past is much more extensive, including both plant and animal remains and ancient cultural remains. In one place H. P. Blavatsky writes in summary:

> The Miocene flora of Europe have their most numerous and striking analogues in the flora of the United States. In the forests of Virginia and Florida are found the magnolias, tulip trees, evergreen oaks, plane trees, etc., etc., etc., which correspond with European tertiary flora term for term. How was the migration effected, if we exclude the theory of an Atlantic Continent bridging the ocean between America and Europe? The proposed "explanation" to the effect that the transition was by way of Asia and the Aleutian islands is a mere uncalled-for theory, obviously upset by the fact that a large number of these flora *only appear* EAST *of the Rocky Mountains.* This also

negatives the idea of a trans-Pacific migration. They are now superseded by European continents and islands to the North. (II, 790.)

Joining South America, Too

The evidence linking Europe with the Americas is not limited to northern areas. As *The Secret Doctrine* points out:

> *Fossils found on the Eastern Coast of South America have now been proved to belong to the Jurassic formations, and are nearly identical with the Jurassic fossils of Western Europe and Northern Africa. The geological structure of both coasts is also almost identical;* the resemblance between the smaller marine animals dwelling in the more shallow waters of South America, the Western African, and the South European coasts, is also very great. All such facts are bound to bring naturalists to the conclusion that htere has been, in distant pre-historic ages, a continent which extended from the coast of Venezuela, across the Atlantic Ocean, to the Canarese Islands and North Africa, and from Newfoundland nearly to the coast of France. (II, 791.)

Redwoods Grew There

The scientists quoted in the *Herald-Examiner* say:

> The fossils found along the barren, rocky Ellesmere Island also show the climate was different. At the time these animals lived, this area just 500 miles south of the North Pole apparently was somewhat swampy with a temperate climate. . . . Plant fossils also showed that temperate trees such as the sequoia grew in the area.

Referring to this region, H.P.B. notes the accord of the naturalists of her time:

> They all agree that during "The Miocene Age"—whether one or ten million years ago—Greenland and even Spitzbergen, the remnants of our Second or Hyperborean Continent, "had *almost a tropical climate.*" . . . "During the Miocene Age, Greenland (in N. Lat. 700°) developed an abundance of trees, such as the Yew, the Redwood, the Sequoia, allied to the Californian species, Beeches, Planes, Willows, Oaks, Poplars and Walnuts, as well as a Magnolia and a Zamia," says Science; in short Greenland had Southern plants unknown to Northern regions. (II, 11.)

Cyclic Change

Elsewhere she says:

> The ever-blooming lands of the Second Continent (Greenland, among others) were transformed, in order, from Edens

> with their eternal spring, into hyperborean Hades. This transformation was due to the displacement of the great waters of the globe, to oceans changing their beds; and the bulk of the Second Race perished in this first great throe of the evolution and consolidation of the globe during the human period. Of such great cataclysms there have already been four. And we may expect a fifth for ourselves in due course of time. (II, 138.)

Protest Against Vaccination

While there has been no compulsory vaccination in Britain for many years, the controversy over this recommended public health measure has been renewed by a Labor Party MP, Jack Ashley, who declared recently that, over a twenty-five-year period, three hundred children in Britain "had been deafened, blinded, or suffered permanent brain damage after immunization against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus." (*Los Angeles Times,* Jan. 7.) While admitting an apparent risk, the British Department of Health urged that the vaccinations be continued. Ashley, who in a letter to the British government ombudsman, Sir Idwal Pugh, said that "happy, healthy children have been turned into cabbages within a few days," held that the human toll from vaccines was too great. This Labor member of parliament is known for his campaigns in behalf of the handicapped. A few years ago, according to the *Times* article, "He led the successful fight in England to get compensation for the victims of Thalidomide." While, through the years, there have been a few medical men and a larger group of laymen who have been critical of vaccination and other forms of artificial immunization, the frightening effects of the swine flu vaccine (causing some deaths in the United States), combined with a general weakening of the germ theory of disease, may eventually lead to a wave of popular opposition to vaccination. Chiropractors, naturopaths, and other advocates of natural methods have long contended that there are better ways to protect the young against infection, and increasing recognition that injections and inoculations bypass the normal defenses of the body may finally succeed in making such invasive methods things of the past.

Meaningless War

Commenting on the recent war in Lebanon, a Beirut psychiatrist, Dr. Addul Rahman Labban, said (*Los Angeles Times,* Dec. 3, 1976):

> This war has been a matter of reciprocal murder without

> goal or value, without hope of victory or plans for change. There have been none of the traditional things, no defeat, no conquest. It was like millions of spectators watching a horrid and almost endless play. How they will finally react to it as they wearily emerge from the theater, no one knows, because there has never been such a play before in man's history. . . .

In the press report Dr. Labban is quoted on the degradations which overtook apparently civilized members of society:

> "We saw sophisticated, educated professional people, one of them I know to be an exceptionally fine doctor, standing on balconies with snipers' rifles, killing almost at random with seeming pleasure." . . .
>
> Right now there is a strange kind of lull. People are no longer dying, but they are not living, either. There is a temporary feeling of relief, even a kind of exhilarating release from tension. Yet just beneath the surface they are on the watch—relieved but not really relaxed. They are anxious. Everyone is reviewing within himself the whole experience. In a month, three months, six months, the feelings will surface as psychoses, depressions, hysteria, phobias.

Youthful Victims

The young on the verge of maturity seem the most affected. The seriously afflicted patients Dr. Labban is now seeing are young schizophrenics of sixteen or seventeen who, he said, "were adrift in this war." There could hardly be stronger confirmation of the idea that the wars of our time are completely abnormal, opening both participants and spectators to psychic infections far worse than death and physical disaster. Fortunately, there are the warning voices of the few who keep their sanity—often doctors of the mind who have close and continued contact with the psychological casualties of war. Shortly after World War II, William Menninger of the Topeka, Kans., Menninger Clinic, pointed out that the modern world is in serious danger of losing touch with human normality. In civilian life, Dr. Menninger said (in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* for September, 1947), the psychiatrist—

> attempted to understand and treat abnormal reactions of persons to normal situations. In military life he attempted to understand and treat the normal reactions to an abnormal situation. One might seriously question if our world condition does not now place us in a continuously abnormal situation to which we are having normal reactions, even though these by all previous standards are pathological. To such a turbulent world, one might legitimately ask, what is a normal reaction?

Irish Peacemakers

There may be many who will think that the development in Northern Ireland by Catholic women of a peace movement which is uncompromisingly opposed to all violence, for whatever cause, is one encouraging sign of awakening normality. In the *New York Times Magazine* for Dec. 29, 1976, Lucinda Franks tells the story of Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams, who "succeeded in getting some 30,000 Protestant and Catholic women out on the streets to demand an end to violence and the beginning of peace between the two communities."

> Suddenly, women who had not been in each other's neighborhoods for years ventured forth; women who had spat at each other over barricades were embracing under a profusion of banners and placards calling for the gunmen on both sides to stop shooting. And now, four months later, 5,000 to 20,000 "peace people" march every weekend in a different town; they have a magazine, two offices and 120 active groups all over the province.

False Heroes

Some of the British, according to this reporter, seem ready enough to end their 800-year-invasion and occupation of Northern Ireland, and the military charged with the impossible task of keeping order between Protestants and Catholics have run out of solutions. The peace movement, a spokesman for the British Army in Northern Ireland said, "might be the last hope." Yet this attempt at reconciliation has led to angry accusations against the peacemakers by the militants on both sides. Meanwhile the women are calling for another kind of idealism:

> "We've made a hero of the man who carries a gun in Northern Ireland; it's the whole John Wayne aura," Mairead says. "We write ballads about men who take life, we romanticize the life of a terrorist, we consecrate them, make memorials of the spots where they died. What we've got to do, as women, is to create new heroes to replace the old."

Betty Williams, Mairead Corrigan's colleague, makes a similar appeal:

> "Our kids don't know how to play—give them a book and they draw tanks and guns on it," Betty Williams said. . . . We have allowed a godfather, mafia-style violence to take us over. We should hang our heads in shame for what we have done to our children. . . . We've got to break down all the myths and the bigotry.

A Long Task

While critics of the movement are skeptical of the possibility "that love and good will alone can conquer 800 years of bitterness and resentment and injustice," the leaders simply reply that all else has failed and that continuation of the violence will mean the end of Northern Ireland. Putting an end to war and violence is indeed not an accomplishment that can be fulfilled without, it may be, centuries of self-sacrificing effort. But when it begins to be realized that the struggle for self-preservation by violent means is, as H.P.B. put it, "a retrograde reinvolution into the animal kingdom," then men and women, generally, may turn their efforts in another direction—that of altruism and brotherhood. (THEOSOPHY 30: 294.) The peace movement of Northern Ireland—and peace movements everywhere—seem an initial recognition of this law.

Fragments of Personalities

A new book, *Forgotten Truth,* by Huston Smith, author of the *Religions of Man,* may prove of particular interest to students of Theosophy. In this work, which is the author's attempt to gather together some of the threads of what he terms the "primordial tradition," there are many passages which seem suggestive of Theosophical teachings. For example, speaking of the possibility of discarnate souls communicating through mediums, he says that such souls ought, being freed of the body, to "testify to the mind in an exceptionally pristine condition." But what comes from mediums is not at all of this character. Dr. Smith says:

> Such reports should be approached with great suspicion, for the "controls" in question are not integrated souls or even integrated minds; they consist mostly of "psychic residues" that minds leave in their wake as they traverse the psychic plane. When our bodies break up under the heavy years and our souls proceed toward eternity, superfluous fragments of our personalities may float on for awhile like small lost rafts on the psychic sea. Reports that derive from these fragments, assuming that some actually do so, could resemble the reports of schizophrenics: truth shot through with ellipses and masses of misrepresentation.

Hidden Reality

For Dr. Smith, the soul is what Theosophists would term the higher ego. He gives this account of its nature:

> The soul is the final locus of our individuality. Situated as

it were behind the senses, it sees through the eyes without being seen, hears with the ears without itself being heard. Similarly it lies deeper than the mind. If we equate mind with the stream of consciousness, the soul is the source of this stream; it is also its witness while never itself appearing within the stream as a datum to be observed. It underlies, in fact, not only the flux of the mind but all the changes through which an individual passes; it thereby provides the sense in which these changes can be considered to be *his*. No collection of the traits I possess—my age, my appearance, what have you—constitutes the essential "me," for the traits change while I remain in some sense myself. To switch to the vocabulary of George Herbert Mead, the fragments of self that present themselves for identification constitute the "me" while the "I" that supports them as a clotheshorse supports the garments we drape over it remains concealed. To try to get the "I" into the field of vision is like trying to see my eyes by stepping back a pace; with every backward move I make, it retreats correlatively. But though the "me" is the only part of myself I can objectify, I sense it to be the object of a subject that is its source and superior.

The "I am I"

Students of Theosophy will more easily recognize Dr. Smith's meaning by comparing what he says with a passage in *The Key to Theosophy* (pp. 33-34) in which, replying to a question about the distinction between the "true individuality" and the personal "Ego," H.P.B. says:

> We distinguish between the simple fact of self-consciousness, the simple feeling that "I am I," and the complex thought that "I am Mr. Smith" or "Mrs. Brown." Believing as we do in a series of rebirths for the same Ego, or reincarnation, this distinction is the fundamental pivot of the whole idea. You see, "Mr. Smith" really means a long series of daily experiences strung together by the thread of memory, and forming what Mr. Smith calls "himself." But none of these "experiences" are really the "I" or the Ego, nor do they give "Mr. Smith" the feeling that he is himself, for he forgets the greater part of his daily experiences, and they produce the feeling of *Egoity* in him only while they last. We Theosophists, therefore, distinguish between this bundle of "experiences," which we call the *false* (because so finite and evanescent) *personality*, and that element in man to which the feeling of "I am I" is due. It is this "I am I" which we call the *true* individuality; and we say that this "Ego" or individuality plays, like an actor, many parts on the stage of life.

Function of the Personality

A further clarification of this distinction is obtained from H.P.B.'s explanation of the occult doctrine of incarnation (in "Psychic and Noetic Action"):

> For, as Occultism teaches, if the Higher Mind-Entity—the permanent and the immortal—is of the divine homogeneous essence of "Alaya-Akasa," or Mahat,—its reflection, the Personal Mind, is, as a temporary "Principle," of the Substance of the Astral Light. As a pure ray of the "'Son of the Universal Mind," it could perform no functions in the body, and would remain powerless over the turbulent organs of Matter. Thus, while its inner constitution is Manasic, its "body," or rather functioning essence, is heterogeneous, and leavened with the Astral Light, the lowest element of Ether. It is a part of the mission of the Manasic Ray, to get gradually rid of the blind, deceptive element which, though it makes of it an active spiritual entity on this plane, still brings it into so close contact with matter as to entirely becloud its divine nature and stultify its intuitions.

End Is Beginning

A renaissance of the kind spoken of by H.P.B. in "The Tidal Wave," characteristic of the closing quarter of the century, is again in evidence and may in a few years more awaken the minds of the many who can be expected to respond. Writing animated by this new spirit is already appearing at various levels, and seems especially evident in the informal sorts of education now becoming available for adults as well as for children. A strong current is also developing in the fields of scholarship, showing that, while higher education is still subject to much confusion, there are those who seem well aware of the obligations of the present to the future. An excellent example of this is available in an article in a recent *Yale Review* by Stan Windass, who writes on "An Alternative Society." After some discussion of the impact of pollution on the environment and the implications of diminished fuel supply, Mr. Windass says:

> We are at the end of an era. The end of one era, however, is the beginning of another. While the politicians rave and the industrialists bury their heads in sand, others are thinking, working, struggling to create the cells of a new social order. They are in every age group and every walk of life.

Philosophic Wondering

There is, he thinks, a deep sort of return to religious feeling

underlying the changes going on:

> I am not thinking about the messiahs and the oriental gurus who attract the young in their thousands. They are a constant sign of the close of an era: Jesus prophesied that in the "last days" all kinds of prophets and pseudo-prophets would roam at large, and this was good psychology. What is more interesting is the way people are exploring in their everyday lives new values, new directions, new meanings and trying to live them out in practice.
>
> When we stop believing in "growth," we have to stop believing in getting more and more things, because that is what growth means for us as individuals. This makes people wonder about the whole business of getting and having—and immediately we are in the deep waters of a long religious and philosophical tradition. It is certainly not just a question of whether or not one is being greedy.

Barrier to Reality

In the Western religious tradition, the idea of acquiring things becomes a habit called "covetousness," but, Mr. Windass says, this is "a much bigger idea than just piling up things or possessions." It makes a difference in what a person *is:*

> If you are out to *have* things then you are basically a "haver," and the world is made up of "havers" and "things to have": St. Augustine in his Christian language said this put a screen between man and God—made it impossible to relate to God, because you were focused on the screen.
>
> Personally, I find this language helpful if by God you mean some ultimate reality which in some way joins you together with the world in a way that is essentially mysterious. If we wanted to put it in a nonreligious way we might say that "havers" could never be in touch with reality. In spite of their grabbing they only get hold of the outside husk of things. Because of that havers become shriveled, hanging on to a shriveled-up world that doesn't have any juice in it any more.

Obscuring Argument

Behind what seem mostly economic considerations are moral realities that are becoming apparent. Mr. Windass shows this in relation to the argument about "intermediate technology":

> Only as the debate deepened did it become obvious that being in charge of your own workplace was a condition of being independent; that small-scale technology often increases a man's potential, whereas large-scale technology decreases it —a fact that we in the West had forgotten amid the heated

debate between large-scale state communism and large-scale corporate capitalism. The more we depend upon vast complex processes and structures which are beyond our understanding and control, the less free we are.

This points to the human need to learn self-sufficiency all over again:

To put it in extreme form, a community which uses local materials and its own skill in order to house itself, clothe itself, and feed itself, and which also enjoys free time for play and celebration, is "free" in a much more radical sense than a community which draws a large income from the industrial treadmill and spends it all to buy its necessities from the outside.

The move toward self-sufficiency implies a rediscovery of basic skills—the skills of providing food, clothing, and shelter. People are suddenly realizing that while we are surrounded with all kinds of extraordinary possessions which are manufactured for us, we have lost a timeless inheritance of creative skills. We live in skyscrapers, yet we are such poor things that we cannot make a house.

Far-Reaching "Value-Shift"

While Mr. Windass is well aware that a great many people will find it impossible to drop what they are doing and look for a home in one of the emerging small communities of the time, it would be a mistake, he thinks, to fail to see in these developments an important sign of the times. "The value shift which I have been describing, the shift from having to being, is one which affects people at every walk of life." Not all can be thought of as "drop-outs":

They may be eminent and successful businessmen, they may be bankers, they may be university professors, they may be politicians or military men. They have been carried forward by a spiritual tide. They can't believe what they used to believe. They can no longer count on respect from the rest of society, and they no longer trust themselves. But where do they go from here?

This is the agonizing question . . . .

The practical answer to such a question, quite obviously, will come in a great variety of individual applications, but one thing seems certain: it will come from a combination of invention with necessity. Those now leading the way are individuals who have found the means to do what they can, and this, as experience shows, nearly always discloses new ranges of possibility.

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